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Gardner-Webb Partners with Western Piedmont Community College

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Office of University
Communications

March 19, 2015

Institutions Create Degree Completion, Facilities Agreements

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—Gardner-Webb University announced it has formed a partnership with Western Piedmont Community College (WPCC) that will help students complete degrees in eight programs and provide GWU with improved facilities to offer academic and career services in the North Carolina foothills.

Officials from Gardner-Webb and WPCC (Morganton, N.C.) formally signed an agreement March 19 to locate GWU's Burke Campus at the community college. GWU previously operated a campus at the Old Rock School in Valdese.

“WPCC boasts a beautiful, well-equipped campus in the rolling hills of Burke County,” shared Dr. Ben Leslie, GWU provost and executive vice president.

“With an annual enrollment of about 13,000, the college represents a significant opportunity for students in the region to transition almost seamlessly from their associate degree program into a bachelor's degree program with a reputable comprehensive university.”

Officials sign agreements March 19.
(Photo courtesy of Western Piedmont
Community College)

The institutions also signed agreements March 19 to create a seamless track for students in eight programs to begin their studies at WPCC and complete them at the GWU. The agreement, called Pathways to reference the structured path of study between the two schools, will ease the transfer process for students in accounting, business administration, criminal justice, paralegal to criminal justice, entrepreneurship, elementary education, human services and nursing programs.

“WPCC is pleased to welcome Gardner-Webb University to the Foothills Higher Education Center (FHEC),” Western Piedmont President Dr. Michael S. Helmick offered. “GWU's presence in offering courses at the FHEC will provide an excellent avenue for WPCC's transfer students to easily transition into a four-year university without leaving Burke County.”

Gardner-Webb previously signed similar program agreements with Cleveland Community College in Shelby, N.C. The University plans to complete additional Pathways agreements with other community colleges in the region in the future.

“In our partnership with WPCC, Gardner-Webb will focus on those educational opportunities we have learned to deliver most effectively through our Degree Completion Program,” Leslie said. “In particular, we know that programs in accounting, criminal justice, business administration, elementary education and human services have opened doors to career paths for thousands of North Carolinians over the years who were seeking to advance in their chosen professions or move into new fields. Education brings opportunities, and opportunities mean economic growth both for individuals and for communities.”

Western Piedmont Community College, located in Morganton, N.C., has served the citizens of Burke and surrounding counties since 1964. Each year, more than 10,000 students pursue personal enrichment, new skills for a job or career, high school diplomas, college degrees and transfer pathways.

Located in Boiling Springs, N.C., Gardner-Webb University provides exceptional educational opportunities within a Christian environment, preparing students to think critically, to succeed professionally, and to serve faithfully as members of their local and global communities.